



Claims Conference Holocaust Survivor Memoir Collection

Access to the print and/or digital copies of memoirs in this collection is made possible by USHMM on behalf of, and with the support of, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Library respects the copyright and intellectual property rights associated with the materials in its collection. The Library holds the rights and permissions to put this material online. If you hold an active copyright to this work and would like to have your materials removed from the web please contact the USHMM Library by phone at 202-479-9717, or by email at digital_library@ushmm.org.

HUNGARIAN MEMORIES

AN ACCOUNT OF JULIUS GLUCK'S FAMILY,
HIS YEARS OF GROWING UP IN HUNGARY,
HIS EXPERIENCES DURING THE WAR
AND AFTERWARDS

BY NANCY GLUCK

NOVEMBER 2007

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Hungarian Marbles.....	4
Four Boys.....	11
War Years	19
Coming Back	26
Hugo and Jolan	32
Sarospatak	36
Maps.....	39

INTRODUCTION

I have been hearing the stories for over 30 years: the summer days on the Bodrog River, Imre and the boots, the Christmas lights on the trip to Vineland by bus in 1946. While I was growing up in southwestern Ohio, my husband Julius, who was born in eastern Hungary, grew up in Sarospatak, was deported to Auschwitz, survived, and came to the United States.

I understood his story only gradually, after we traveled to Israel, Hungary and Vineland, New Jersey. I met his stepmother Jolan, who also came to this country after the war. I met his surviving cousins: Gabor, Agi and Imre.

Like many survivors of those times, Julius talked very little with his children and grandchildren about his experiences before coming to America. In a memoir class, I assigned myself the task of telling his story.

Interviewing Julius has been like trying to empty a bucket with a teaspoon. My husband is an engineer, he reports only essential facts.

What happened then?

They took us away.

Who was “they”?

The gendarmes.

The Hungarian gendarmes?

Yes.

No Germans?

No, the gendarmes brought the orders.

Where did they take you?

The school grounds.

Which school?

The Jewish elementary school.

The one you showed me in Sarospatak?

Yes.

When we were in Sarospatak, he showed me the school he attended from age six to 10. He did not mention then that the school was where the Sarospatak Jews were held.

My first drafts were almost as bare as the interviews. The members of my memoir class have helped me to see that this memoir is also my story. My part is not the experiences Julius reports, but the many years I have known him and his family, as well as what I have learned about the world they came from.

It has helped to study the family photographs together. Who are these people? Where are they? What happened to them? We have also found wonderful images on the Internet: relevant maps, aerial photographs of his home town, and pictures of the Polish castle where he was a slave laborer.

Julius says he is pleased that his children and grandchildren will know him better. We offer this memoir to his son, daughter and grandchildren, to his cousins and descendants of cousins, and to the members of my own family who know and love him.

*Nancy Gluck
November 2007*

HUNGARIAN MARBLES

When you dump a bag of marbles on the living room rug, a few stay where you dump them, but most of them roll away, waiting to surprise your bare feet in the dark. That's how I think of the Hungarian Jews after World War II, dumped down and rolling off into the world. I met Julius Gluck in 1975 and we married in 1979. In the 30-some years we have been together, Julius has tried to find those Hungarian marbles and I have tried to sight along their trail back to Hungary.

Julius and I meet Hungarian Jews wherever we travel. In Montreal we visited Julius' Uncle Laci who was staying with Frank and Lily. I had never heard of Frank and Lily. Who were they? What was the exact relationship? I learned that Laci's second wife, Rosika, had a deceased brother who had been married to Lily, who was now Frank's second wife. When your relatives have been decimated, you cling to whoever is left. After the war, the adult survivors who lost wives or husbands remarried quickly, desperate to recreate the family life they had lost and make new connections.

We have visited relatives, friends, relatives of friends and friends of relatives in Detroit, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Montreal, Buenos Aires, Basle, Cambridge, Prague, Aruba, Haifa and Tel Aviv.

Some Hungarian Jews did leave before World War II, and they prepared the way for the ones who came later, the survivors. My husband Julius is a survivor, and I want to tell his story for his children and grandchildren. They know Julius, but they know little of his life in Hungary and the times through which he passed. I can put myself into this memoir because it is also my story. My part is not the experiences Julius reports, but the many years I have known Julius and his family, as well as what I have learned of the world they came from. I have listed some of the relatives at the end of the memoir and have also included a family tree, drawn by Julius.

We have to take a big view of Hungary. Hungarians are Hungarians, whether they come from present-day Hungary or not. Julius' father, Hugo Gluck, was born in Ruskov in what is Slovakia today but was part of the Austro Hungarian Empire then. Hungary was separated off as an independent country after World War I. By the time Hugo settled in eastern Hungary in 1924 he was in a new country, but he did not change his citizenship. Julius was born in Hungary but, when he applied for postwar compensation, today's Hungarians held his father's origins against him. Since his father was not a citizen of the new Hungary, neither was Julius. He was a Hungarian Jew all right, but not their Hungarian Jew.

In moderately prosperous families like the Glucks, the marbles did not roll far in the years before World War II. Comfortable and satisfied with their lives, they moved about within the Hungarian-speaking regions of the former Austro Hungarian Empire: today's Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the Transylvania area of Romania.

Hugo Gluck, Julius' father, was born in 1894, the oldest son and one of the six children of Herman Gluck and Juliska Horowitz. On that side of the family Julius had four cousins. Of Julius' parents' generation, only Hugo, his brother Laci and his sister Elza survived the war. Of the cousins, two survived.

Grandfather Herman Gluck had various enterprises including an inn and a stone quarry. During World War I he bought an estate in Kelenye, Slovakia, where every year, three generations of Glucks sat at the big table in the formal dining room for the Passover Seder. Although he did not understand the ceremony in Hebrew, Julius loved being with

his cousins and looked forward to the presents the children received. The family followed traditions and kept a kosher household, but spoke Hungarian, not Yiddish in the home. Grownups spoke German when they wanted to say things to each other that the children shouldn't understand. The family turned to the wider community for commerce and education. Uncle Bela, for example, was educated as a chemical engineer although he never practiced the profession.

Julius barely remembers his Grandfather Gluck, who died in the early 1930s. After his death, Uncle Bela took over management of the estate. When Julius was about eight, the family gathered for the double wedding of Uncles Bela and Laci. Julius' says, "Before the festivities, my little brother Imre collected the flowers decorating the tables and sold them to the guests. After the meal he became drunk by polishing off whatever wine was left in the glasses."

Grandmother Gluck spent the summers on the estate. Julius remembers her as a small woman in the big kitchen at Kelenye, fully in charge of two maids and several daughters and daughters-in law. She pious, praying daily – something no other member of the family did – and fasting every Thursday. She spent the winters with one of her married daughters or wherever she was needed to help with a new or a sick grandchild. She lived into the war years and died in Auschwitz.

Julius' father, Hugo, received an education in economics in Vienna and Grenoble in the years just before World War I. He served as an officer in the Austro Hungarian army on the Russian front, where his life may have been spared when a pocket Bible stopped a bullet. He was captured by the Russians and held by them until the end of the war. As an officer, he had a rather privileged existence and learned the Russian language. He also knew French, along with some German and Slovak. When he returned from Russia to his parents' estate, Hugo, influenced by the Bolshevik revolution, proposed to distribute the land to the peasants. His parents did not agree to this, but Hugo stayed on to help establish the farm.

I never knew Hugo, who spent his last years in Vineland, New Jersey, and died before I met Julius. Every year we go the cemetery, to the graves of Hugo and his second wife. The Jewish cemetery near Vineland is on a country road, a very quiet place. No one else is ever about during our visits, but on Memorial Day the local veterans group comes. By Hugo's headstone, we find an American flag and a World War I marker. "Why the marker?" I ask.

"He fought in World War I," Julius says. It's true that Hugo became an American citizen and fought in that war, but I don't think the veterans realize that he fought for the other side.

Julius' mother was Julia Schwarcz, the second daughter of Moricz and Berta Schwarcz. Both Julia and her sister Frida were born in Sarospatak in eastern Hungary, near the present border with Slovakia and Ukraine. Their father Moricz was also born in Sarospatak and lived there all his life. Their mother, Bertha Klammer, was from Slovakia, where she had been the young widow of an army officer before marrying Moricz.

Moricz lived in town, had a butcher shop and managed his farms and vineyards in the surrounding countryside. Sarapastak is located on the Bodrog River, which flows south to join the Tisza at Tokay, then on through Romania to the Danube. A bridge crosses the river at Sarostpatak and connects the lowlands on the south with the hill country on the north. The farms were in the lowlands and the vineyards were in the hills; Moricz went back and forth between them, usually in a horse-drawn buggy. Sometimes he put a piece of bread or a green onion in his pocket for a snack on the road and took the

young Julius with him. Julius still likes to nibble during a journey.

Moricz had a reputation for financial shrewdness. Family legend says that at one time he was a financial advisor – a sort of a court Jew – to the grand people of Windishgraetz Castle. If true, his advice had ended by the time of Julius' boyhood. Moricz died in 1933 during the depression. When his daughters, Frida and Julia, received their inheritance they found that the debts exceeded the value of the farms and vineyards. Frida, with her brother-in-law Hugo, worked to manage the lands and pay the debts until Hugo left for America in 1938. Then Frida continued to manage everything until 1944.

Frida may have had nurse's training; she worked as a nurse during World War I, assisting with the wounded brought to Sarospatak from the Russian front. She married Dr. Gyula Szabo. He had received his medical training in Budapest and practiced as a country doctor in Sarospatak with Frida initially helping as his nurse. They had two sons, Sandor and Gabor.

Very few Hungarian Jews have Hungarian last names. When I came to know Gabor Szabo in later years. I looked up *szabo* in a Hungarian-English dictionary and found that the word means tailor. "Why," I asked Julius, "did most of your family have German surnames, while Gabor's branch had a Hungarian one?"

Julius explained that in the eighteenth century, the order came from Vienna that the Jews must take family names. "Most Hungarian Jews took German names because the Germans were running things. The Szabos were on the border between Ruthenia and Transylvania, so far back in the sticks that they didn't know the score."

Julia Schwarcz had a general, civil education and married Hugo Gluck in 1924. They met through a matchmaker, a shadchen, aided by the fact that there were already family ties. Hugo's sister Elza was married to Naci Roth, who had been a neighbor of the Schwarcz family in Sarospatak. During the red revolution in Hungary after World War I, Naci was a known Communist and active in the Party in Sarospatak. When the rightists, led by Admiral Horthy, took over in Hungary, Naci and Elza departed for Slovakia, where the Community Party was legal and where Naci had a store selling agricultural machinery and also became a banker.

Non-Hungarians are often disturbed by the name of Julius' uncle, Naci, which sounds just like the *Nazi* of Hitler's Nazi Party. I asked Julius once if family members were disturbed by the similar sounds of Naci and Nazi. "Why should that bother them?" Julius asked. "Uncle Naci had his name first."

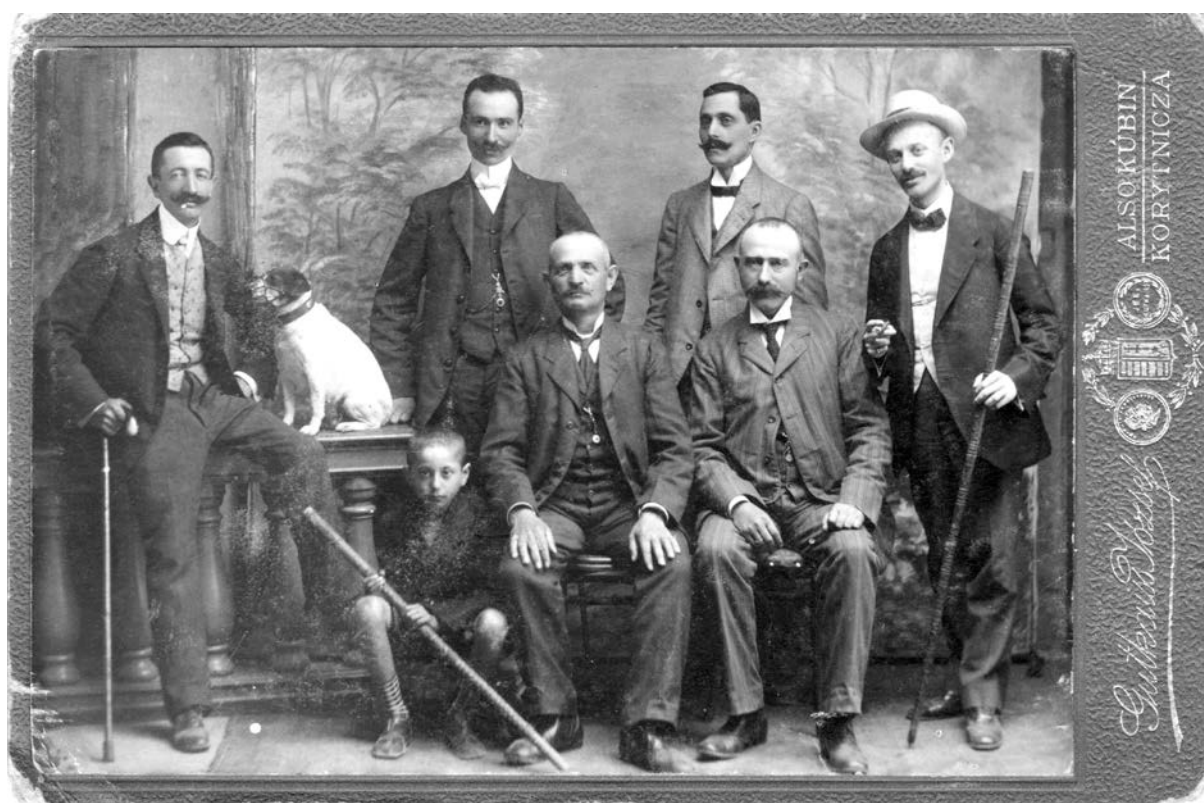
Hugo settled in Sarospatak. Since he was a Czech citizen, the nationalistic Hungarians gave him a hard time about his residency, even though he was married to a local girl. Using family money, he bought into two lumber businesses, dealing in hardwood, railroad ties, firewood and tree bark for the chemicals used in making leather. Later, with another partner, he expanded with three stores in Szeged, in central Hungary, and near Lake Balaton. Hugo was energetic and enterprising, but he also had the support of a wide network of family and friends.

Julius was born on June 8, 1925, in Sarospatak, the first child of Hugo and Julia. The Hungarian version of the name Julius is Gyula or Gyuszi. He was not given a middle name, and the use of middle names was not a common practice at that time. Four years later, his brother Imre was born.

In age order, the four cousins were Sandor, Julius, Gabor, and Imre. Although in the future, these marbles would roll far apart, the four boys grew up together in Sarospatak as close as four brothers.



Austria-Hungary before World War I. The Kingdom of Hungary within the Austro-Hungarian Empire was much larger than independent Hungary is today.



Six Gluck brothers and brother-in-laws, 1904. Their prosperity and assimilation are apparent in their dress. Julius' grandfather, Herman Gluck [front row, right], was the oldest of the six. Next to him is his brother Lajos, father of cousins Vilma and Doci. The boy is Hugo Gluck, Julius' father.



Juliska (Horowitz) and Herman Gluck in the 1920s. They were the parents of Hugo Gluck, Julius' father, and lived in what is now Slovakia.



Rakoczi Castle today has been restored and is a major tourist attraction in Sarospatak. When Julius was a boy it was called Windishgraetz Castle for the family that last occupied it.



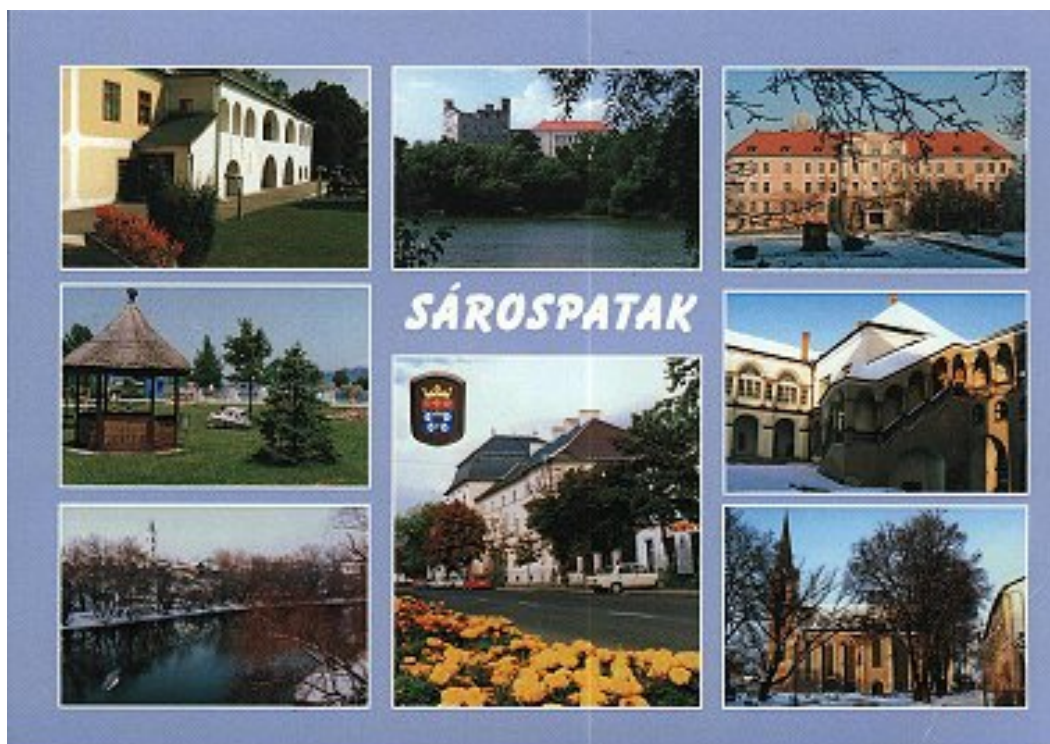
The Moricz Schwarcz house in Sarospatak, circa 2000. Moricz lived on one side and had his shop on the other. The central entrance with its carved wooden door led back to a courtyard and additional apartments.



The Szabo family, circa 1935. From left: Frida (Schwarcz), Gabor Szabo, Sandor Szabo, Dr. Gyula Szabo.



Julius with his parents, circa 1928. From left: Julia (Schwarcz), Julius Gluck, Hugo Gluck.



FOUR BOYS

The big house on Rakoczi Street in Sarospatak Hungary, where my husband Julius lived from the time he was six until they were all taken away, is near the center of town. In fewer than five minutes, he could walk to his grandparents' house, the big synagogue on the main street, the Jewish elementary school, and the Protestant school where he studied as a teen ager. In just a few more minutes he could reach Rakoczi Castle or the bridge over the Bodrog River.

The house is tall, built of stone covered with reddish tan stucco, its façade right at the sidewalk in the European style and the windows set high – no casual looking in is possible. I have seen the house from the outside several times, but have never been inside. Julius says that many of the ground floor rooms have vaulted ceilings. On the left a large wooden door closes off the entrance. On one of our visits, someone has left the door open, so we peek through a passageway large enough to admit a horse and carriage to the courtyard beyond. The courtyard is walled off on the left by the adjoining building and on the right by a row of tenant apartments and cow stalls. "I remember vegetable gardens and even a cow in the back," Julius says, but we can't see them now. There is a plaque on the house to commemorate an earlier distinguished resident, but the Glucks and Szabos who also lived in that house do not have a plaque.

Julius, his parents and his brother Imre shared the house with Aunt Frida, his mother's sister, as well as with Frida's family. Her husband, Uncle Gyula Szabo, practiced medicine in part of the house. Their sons, Sandor and Gabor, grew up with the Gluck boys. Sandor, the oldest, was competent in academics and sports and just a bit aloof. Julius and Gabor were very close in age and spirit. Little Imre followed along as best he could.

Sarospatak was a school and market town with a mixed population. The Hungarian Protestants were the largest group, but there were also Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Jews and Gypsies. The assimilated Jews like the Glucks obeyed the laws, owned property, educated their children and considered themselves good Hungarians. The Gypsies did none of these things and were not to be trusted. Nevertheless, they made music, so when Cousin Gabor studied the violin, he initially had a Gypsy tutor. The Jews made up perhaps 10% of the population and they had two synagogues: the big one Julius' family and friends attended and a smaller one for the strongly orthodox, a poorer and less educated group. I asked Julius if Sarospatak was a friendly or unfriendly place when he was young. "Not friendly," he said, "not friendly in the street, after I started to go to school."

He liked his first school, the Jewish elementary school, well enough, although he did not consider himself an outstanding student. It was a small school with a total of perhaps 90 students. Always a committed gardener, Julius remembers fondly that pictures of vegetable gardens hung on the classroom wall. He competed in school games, feeling invincible in the long jump and as a soccer goalie.

Julius remembers that, until he was 11, he went for at least a month each summer to the Gluck estate Kelenye in Slovakia. His grandmother and various daughters or daughters-in-law were in charge of Julius, Imre and other Gluck grandchildren. *Big* Imre, his cousin, was the ringleader, while Julius and his brother, known there as *Little* Imre, were the followers. They thoroughly explored country life, with daytime expeditions to the fields and quiet evenings in the house, lamplit because there was no electricity. The

house was large, with a wide stone-paved hallway which led back to the lavatory. The toilet was on a platform, like a throne, with several steps to climb up to it. Outdoors, Big Imre led his cousins up and down the stony ravines or off to the sheep farm where they helped to pack the sheep cheese into barrels. Every summer, small green figs formed on the fig tree which grew by the sunny side of the kitchen wall. And every summer, Julius never got to eat a fig. He always had to return to Sarospatak before the figs were ripe.

At the age of 10, each of the four boys transferred to the Protestant gymnasium. The gymnasium was an elite secondary school which prepared students for the university and the professions. This gymnasium was founded in 1520 for the education of the sons of the Protestant nobility. It charged tuition based on the religion of the student, with Protestants paying the least, Catholics paying the next higher amount, and Jews paying the most.

The buildings, some dating back to the 1700s, formed a quadrangle, very much like a small college. It specialized in English-language instruction. In addition to the required English, the boys studied German, Latin, mathematics, Hungarian literature and history. The approach was abstract: physics and chemistry were taught from books, with no little or no laboratory practice. Most of the students were boarders and came from other parts of Hungary. The Gluck and Szabo boys were day students and Jewish, a small minority in the school. In Julius' class of 30 boys, only two were Jewish.

Although Julius entered the gymnasium when he was 10, his education there was almost immediately interrupted by scarlet fever and a subsequent series of illnesses, including pneumonia. He was kept at home all that year. After an x-ray examination, his parents told him he had shadow on his lung and took him to a children's sanitarium – a *kinderheim* – in the High Tatra mountains of Slovakia. There were many children there, spending their days stretched out on lounges on three levels of open-air porches. Julius does not remember being frightened of the place where the staff spoke three languages: German, Slovak and Hungarian. He liked the mountain scenery and the abundant good food, but he was very bored. After several months in the Tatra the summer he was 11, he returned home, but not to school. For two more years he had private tutors at home and returned to the *kinderheim* each summer and at least once in the winter, when rest on the open-air porches required many blankets.

When his parents visited they sometimes took Julius on brief excursions in the mountains and to Poland on the far side of the Tatra. No one ever told him that he had tuberculosis, although it seems obvious now that he must have had. Those were the days before antibiotics, and the standard treatment was good nutrition, bed rest and plenty of fresh mountain air. One result of the sanitarium treatment was that Julius entered what he calls his "fat period"; photographs of him taken then show a plumpness he does not retain as an adult.

When, at age 13, Julius went back to the gymnasium, he had to drop back a grade in school, but he had gained his strong resolve to live an active, outdoor life.

In that outdoor life he enjoyed the rowboats that his school kept on the Bodrog River for use by the students. The present bridge over the Bodrog is built on the foundations of the earlier bridge. When I stand on the bridge during a visit I have the same view that the boys had then. The brownish river flows slowly toward Tokay where the grapes are grown for Tokay wine. To the right, is the strand, the sandy bathing beach where the boys went to swim. To the left is the gymnasium's boathouse. When the boarding students went home for the summer, the local boys had little competition for use of the boats. Once away from the boathouse, it was even possible to take aboard a Jewish

friend who did not attend the gymnasium. Together, Julius, Gabor and their friend rowed upstream to explore the river in flood or to go ashore in the forest. The boys found that swimming from the boat was a particular challenge: getting into the water was easy, but getting back into the boat was hard.

Those days on the water stay in Julius' heart. When we have a perfect summer day in Connecticut – warm, but not too warm, sunny and dry – he says, “Nice day, just like Hungary.” Julius has never been without a small boat of some sort: the folding kayak, the plastic-hulled sunflower sailboat and, more recently, a series of sea kayaks for exploring the Norwalk islands.

About ten years ago, Julius went back to Hungary to visit Gabor and bring him an inflatable two-man boat. Gabor did not have long to live, although neither of them knew then how short the time would be. They took the boat to the Tisza River, above its junction with the Bodrog, and inflated it. Gabor put on a captain's hat, Julius saluted, and they spent many happy hours paddling up and down, with occasional swims from the boat. It is a good last memory to have.

Imre did not share Julius and Gabor's affection for boats, but he did like to bicycle and walk. Together, he and Julius explored the outskirts of Sarospatak. Their favorite walks were to the three family vineyards, acquired by their grandfather, Moricz, and now managed by Aunt Frida and their father. The best walk of all was out the Darno Valley Road. On one side of the valley, the vineyards ran up the hills, with fruit trees along the road. On our most recent visit there, Julius and I found the vineyards gone and the fruit trees neglected and unpicked. Overripe fruit was dropping from the trees and fermenting in the ditches, filling the air with a plummy, slightly alcoholic scent.

In those boyhood years, each vineyard had a vineyard keeper who stayed in a small hut during the season of growth and harvest, drying the plums on a slow-fired hearth. On one occasion, when the keeper was away, Julius and his friends entertained themselves by sliding down the thatched roof into a pile of springy vine cuttings. After many slides, and some visible damage to the roof, they decided it would be wise to leave before the keeper returned.

A few years ago in France, when we were exploring the great park at Versailles, Julius and I came upon a chateau in the neoclassical style. “What is this?” he asked. I said that it was the Petite Trianon, beloved by Marie Antoinette as a refuge from the great sprawling hotel which is the palace at Versailles. “Oh!” Julius was shaking his fist in the air like one of Mao's followers with a little red book and chanting, with a smile on his face, “Non, Non, Trianon! Non, Non, Trianon! No, No Never!” They did that in school, he explained, to denounce the Trianon treaty signed after World War I, a treaty which took away from Hungary many areas in which Hungarians lived. The Hungarians wanted those territories back and eventually got what they wished for when Germany acquired the German-speaking Sudetenland section of Czechoslovakia in 1938. In order to promote an alliance, Hitler restored part of Slovakia to Hungary. As a result, the Hungarian army marched unopposed into southern Slovakia, and Hugo Gluck, Julius' father, was put into prison.

The Hungarians arrested Hugo and imprisoned him near Budapest on grounds of general suspicion. He was a Jew and they wanted to impress the Germans by being tough on Jews. He had kept his Czech citizenship, probably because of the family property in Slovakia, so he could be expected to oppose the German and Hungarian expansion into Czechoslovakia.

Hugo was confined for about a month, then released. He did not return home, but

stayed in Budapest, awaiting his visa to the United States for which he had applied earlier. He saw great trouble ahead, especially since his situation made him suspect to the Hungarians. His visa application said that he wanted to visit the World's Fair in New York, but what he really wanted to do was to arrange to bring his family out of an increasingly dangerous situation. He had relatives in New York who might be able to help. Julius, his mother and brother visited Hugo in Budapest, but the boys were not told their father was leaving. His visa came, he left, and Julius did not see him again for eight years. We can understand why Hugo left, and certainly Julius understands it now, but the teen age boy in Hungary felt that his father had abandoned them.

The four boys who grew up together in Sarospatak became three when Sandor went to Szeged. Cousin Sandor, the oldest, was a lively boy, who liked sports, especially fencing. He finished at the gymnasium in 1942 and successfully matriculated, passing the demanding examinations which qualified a person for higher education. His family sent him to Szeged to help in the lumber store there and to study law. In wartime Hungary, young men were drafted into the army, but *Jewish* young men were conscripted into labor brigades. In the spring of 1944, they conscripted Sandor. He disappeared into the turmoil of the last year of the war.



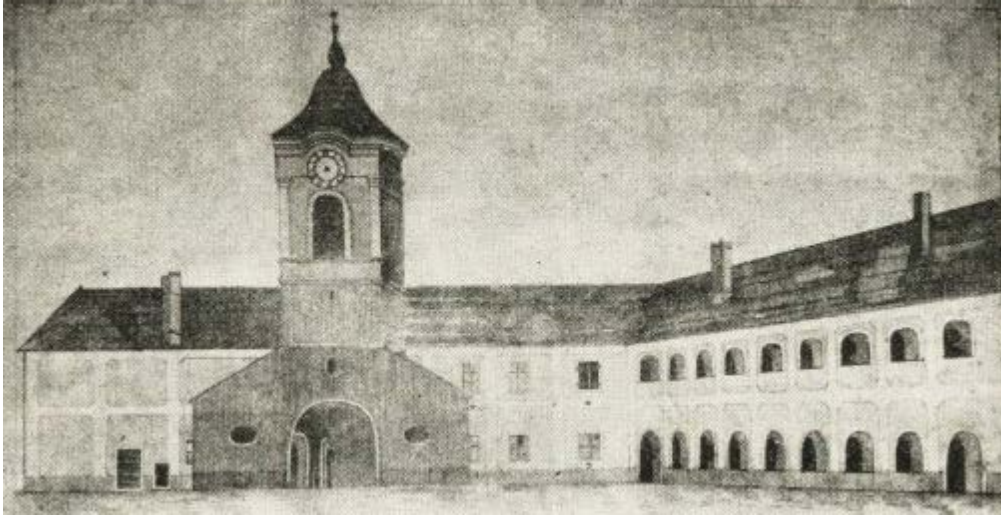
Julius is front of the house on Rakoczi Street in Sarospatak where the Gluck and Szabo families lived in the 1930s and early 1940s.



Sarospatak today. The large building on the left is the Protestant gymnasium. Rakoczi Street runs from left to right, in front of the gymnasium and behind the church. The house of the Glucks and Szabos on Rakoczi Street faced toward the church—the back of the house is marked with an arrow.



The pictures of the house at the Kelenye estate in Slovakia were taken after the war in 1948 . The building was empty and neglected and was subsequently torn down.



An early print of the Collegium classrooms and where the boarding students at the Protestant gymnasium may have lived.



Julius and his family, circa 1934. From left: Imre, Julia, Hugo, Julius.



The Bodrog River and bridge today. The building at the bottom center is Rakoczi Castle. The open green area between the castle and the bridge was the location of the Orthodox Jewish community and synagogue. Julius' house was behind the church, upper left.



The family vineyard in the Darno Valley, circa 1943. It is harvest time and the workers have gathered to pick the grapes.



Hugo Gluck in 1938.

WAR YEARS

Hugo Gluck, my husband Julius' father, left for the United States in late 1938. Even before that, there were important changes in Julius' life. His health was better and he returned to the gymnasium that fall. The Glucks and Szabos rearranged their accommodations in the house of Rakoczi Street, moving his Uncle Gyula's medical practice to the first floor, while the families took the two apartments on the second floor. For a time, his Aunt Frida and his mother Julia shared a kitchen, but after a time they subdivided the space. It is difficult for two women, even sisters, to share a kitchen.

When Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, World War II began. Hugo had not yet been able to bring the family out and now the borders were closed. He had been joined in the U.S. by his sister, Aunt Elza, and her husband, Uncle Naci. As a Jew and a communist, Naci was not safe in a Czechoslovakia which had fallen under German and Hungarian control. Miklos Horthy, the regent who had ruled in place of the king of Hungary since 1920, and the conservatives were sympathetic to Germany, eventually signing on to a formal alliance in 1940. When the war started, truckloads of Polish refugees filled the main roads through Sarospatak. The boys from the gymnasium stood along the road, waving at the refugees. The school director reminded them that Hungary was Germany's friend, but the boys' sympathies were with the Poles. Later, in 1941, when the Hungarian army marched with the Germans into Russia, those English-language instructors at the gymnasium who were British or Canadian citizens were interned. English language classes continued, taught by Hungarian instructors who had lived and studied in Britain and loved the culture.

Hugo was able to take only a limited amount of money with him, so almost all of his considerable assets remained in Hungary. His partners continued to operate his various businesses and paid Hugo's share to Julius' mother. The family income was not much diminished.

Although tea and meat were scarce and sugar was rationed, people like the Glucks and Szabos with good connections on the farms had enough to eat during the war years. The Hungarian government protected its Jews from deportation until 1944, but did implement a series of restrictive laws, for example, severely restricting access to the professions and forbidding kosher slaughtering of meat. Young Jewish men – including Julius' cousin Sandor – were no longer conscripted into the army, but into labor brigades. At first these brigades worked in Hungary, but later in the war many were sent as support to the Russian front, a very dangerous place to be.

The Gluck and Szabo boys did not feel a direct effect of the restrictions. Jews received the same rations as other Hungarians and members of the family could still travel within the area and visit one another. They experienced some anti-Semitic bullying in the Protestant gymnasium. "Some of the worst of the anti-Semites were expelled," Julius reports, with some satisfaction. Because they were disruptive? "No, because they failed their courses."

During these years the family continued to exchange letters with Hugo in America, sometimes through the Swiss Red Cross and sometimes through the Vatican. Hugo wanted them to leave and, although he could get visas for them, they would have to manage their own transportation out of Hungary, perhaps through Spain or Portugal. Julia, Julius' mother, did not want to take a chance on doing something that might well be more dangerous than staying put. Hungarians – especially those who listened to the BBC

– were aware than Germany was losing the war. When the Russians defeated the German army at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-43, the Hungarian army fighting alongside the Germans also suffered terrible losses. Julius recalls that the newspapers called it “straightening the front.” The Soviet armies went on the offensive and by early 1944 had retaken most of their territory. The Allied armies were preparing to invade France. By all rational considerations, the destruction of the Jews should have stopped. It did not. Infuriated by Horthy’s protection of the lives, if not the rights, of Hungary’s Jewish citizens and concerned that the Hungarians would make a separate peace, the Germans took over control of the Hungarian government in the spring of 1944. Adolph Eichmann set up his headquarters in Budapest and in March of 1944, the first roundups of the Jews began.

At this time, Julius was 19 and finishing his eighth-year class at the gymnasium, preparing to take the dreaded matriculation examinations that would qualify him for further, university-level education. In late winter, in February he thinks, the three boys still living at home were sent to stay with family members at outlying farms to remove them from the eyes of local authorities who might want to conscript them for the labor brigades. Julius thinks it was an opportunity for escape but, “I cannot see, even now, where we could have escaped to.” There were partisans in the hills, but he did not learn of their existence until after the war. By March, the family brought the boys back to town. A sense of resignation, of despair even, was general in the Jewish community.

In March, the local gendarmes brought the orders to leave their homes within one day and assemble on the grounds of the local Jewish elementary school. They could only bring what they could carry: warm clothes and as much food as possible. During that day of preparation, Julia stored some of her possessions, including her precious mink coat, a gift from Hugo, with the wife of a local Protestant pastor. After the war Julius reclaimed the coat and sold it to help support himself. For two weeks the Sarospatak Jews were kept on the grounds of the school, sleeping in the open, but receiving help from one of their workers who brought them supplies from their house. Julius says, “I felt mostly relief that I would not have to take the matriculation exams.”

Uncle Gyula, the doctor, and Aunt Frida were not at the elementary school. Sarospatak had four doctors, two Jewish and two Christian. Incarcerating the Jewish doctors would have cut the medical staff in half, so the two Jewish doctors and their wives were allowed to remain free to serve the community. I marvel at the mind that sees the Jews in general as a menace while trusting one’s life and health to Jewish doctors. Cousin Gabor, the son of Uncle Gyula and Aunt Frida, was not exempt; he was with Julius, his mother and brother at the school grounds.

After two weeks, the Sarospatak Jews were loaded onto trains and taken to a larger town a few miles away. Here the new arrivals were assigned rooms in the ghetto which had been established there. Julius, his mother, brother and cousin slept on the floor for two months, during which time groups were moved out by train. Julius and his family were among the last to leave. The two Jewish doctors and their wives who had remained in Sarospatak heard of the deportations and, just before Julius left, the four of them committed suicide, using the drugs to which they had access. Julius’ uncle and aunt died quickly; the other couple were taken to the ghetto and died on the way. Julius learned of the deaths of Gyula and Frida at the time, but everyone kept the news from their son Gabor until after the war.

Julius did not know where they were going. Germany? Poland? During four days of travel Julia spent much of the time weeping, grieving that she had not tried to take the

boys away. When they arrived, they knew where they were: the Auschwitz concentration camp. On the train platform, SS officers and prison laborers unloaded them from the boxcars and separated them into groups. It was a selection, but Julius did not know then what a selection was, or that some were immediately selected for death. Julia was taken away with the other women. It was the last time Julius saw her.

The men and boys were herded into large halls. Julius was still with his cousin and brother, as well as many acquaintances from Sarospatak like the family dentist. All were required to strip off their clothes and their hair was cut. They showered and dressed in prison garb: trousers, shirt, jacket, cap. Then they were marched up a muddy road to a barracks so crowded that some people shimmied up the supports to lie on the rafters. Julius particularly remembers the long walk to the latrines – always, as he remembers, in a cold drizzle. They had no occupation during this time, except for marching, standing and being counted.

After several weeks, Julius' group was again put on a train and they journeyed two days to a work camp near Breslau (now Wroclaw) in Silesia, in what is now Poland near the border with today's Czech Republic. "After being in Auschwitz," Julius remarks, "the work camp felt like a resort." The barracks were better and less crowded. Regular meals were provided: bread and ersatz coffee in the morning, soup at midday, and bread and soup at night.

Julius and the others were assigned to work details. They marched every day from their camp to Salzbrun Castle, now called Ksiaz Castle by the Poles. During the next months he worked with a shovel at a construction site, chipped holes through castle walls for the installation of telephone lines and helped with window repairs. "We peed all over the castle," he remembers. "The place was so vast and the walk to the prisoners' latrine outside the castle was so long, that we urinated in any dusty corner we could find."

Although the war was going badly in the east, the castle was being prepared as a local residence for Hitler, so refurbishing it had a high priority.

The boys were together in the barracks, but in different work crews. A distant relative had become a capo and got Julius' brother Imre an assignment in the large underground system of tunnels which was part of the castle project.

Gabor was particularly fortunate, working under a sympathetic foreman who gave him extra food. Gabor told me once that if he were a rich man he would build a monument to the potato because it saved his life. I treated the matter lightly. "You could commission a statue of a beautiful woman," I suggested, "and call her the spirit of the potato."

"Not a woman," Gabor said. "A potato."

By the winter of 1944-45, however, the prisoners were set to digging anti-tank ditches. The food deteriorated and so did the condition of the prisoners. Silesia was snowy and the ground had frozen. Julius became very weak and his legs swelled due to malnutrition. Through the connivance of some of the Jewish capos, he was sometimes able to slack off work during the day and often had to be supported on each side on the way back to the barracks. In January 1945 he was taken to the *Krankhaus*, the "sick house," where he was kept with other equally sick prisoners. Perhaps in more organized times he and the others would have been sent back to Auschwitz for extermination. The only prisoners in the work camp who were executed, however, were those who tried to escape. "They were hung." Just the same, extermination was a constant fear for those in the *Krankhaus*.

Sometimes our most bitter regrets are not for what we have done, but for what we

have failed to do. Gabor and his brother Imre came to visit Julius, talking to him through the window. Imre, who was also very weak, begged for food or cigarettes. "I did not help him." In February all the people in the work camp were moved away from the advancing Soviet army. Those unable to walk were taken on trucks. Julius says, "I was sitting on the ground and my feet were so swollen I could not put my boots on. They were loading the trucks and the lagerfuhrer was beating me on the head with a stick and yelling at me to hurry up. Imre saw this and, although I had not helped him when he asked me, he took off his boots, which were larger than mine, and gave them to me. We exchanged boots." Those who could still walk, including Imre, Gabor and many Sarospatak friends, were marched away to the west.

The residents of the Krankhaus were also taken farther west in Silesia by truck, to Doernhau, a sort of a holding camp. Everyone there was sick, in Julius' memory. The food was very little and the Germans were seldom seen and only at a distance. The prisoners stayed in large rooms resting on several levels of straw-covered boards. Julius was given some help by friends from the old Jewish elementary school who had preceded him there. One of Julius' swollen knees became infected. A prisoner who was a doctor used a razor blade to perform a crude operation, opening and draining the infected knee. "He gave me something," Julius remembers, "but I felt a lot of pain." After the operation, the wound remained open and draining, but the infection did not advance. He still has a long scar on his leg from that experience.

Some news reached the prisoners. They heard of the successful allied invasion in the west and of Hitler's suicide as the Soviets advanced on Berlin. The Germans disappeared completely. On May 8 – a date still celebrated in Europe as V-E Day – the first Russian troops entered the camp. "I was too weak to get up, but when one of them came into the room, I knew from his clothes who he must be." The Russians immediately addressed the situation of the prisoners, moving them into the abandoned German officers' barracks. Julius was too weak to lift his feet over the threshold of his new room. The Russians forced the local inhabitants to come in to clean up the camp and provide basic necessities, such as bedding and food. "I don't know why I didn't die then," Julius remarks. "Many did." It took him several weeks to regain enough strength to walk around on his own.

I asked Julius what his thoughts were when he knew he was free. He answered, "I was thinking only of food."



Cousins at Rakoczi Castle, late 1938 after the border was opened with Slovakia. Front row: Imre Gluck (*Little Imre*), Julius Gluck. Back row: Imre Friedman (*Big Imre*), Sandor Szabo. Big Imre became Uri Gilad when he moved to Israel.



The combined Gluck and Szabo families, circa 1942. Front row: Julia Gluck, Dr. Gyula Szabo. Back row: Julius Gluck, Gabor Szabo, Imre Gluck, Frida Szabo, a visiting Szabo cousin from Transylvania, Sandor Szabo.

Comité International de la Croix-Rouge
Palais du Conseil Général, GENEVE (Suisse)
AMERICAN RED CROSS
Washington, D. C.

Form 1514
Rev. April 1942

CIVILIAN MESSAGE FORM

Sender—Envoyeur
Name—Nom Glick
Christian name—Prénom Harold H.
Street—Rue East Ave + C.R.H.
City—Localité Vineland
State—Province New Jersey
Message to be transmitted—Message à transmettre—
(not more than 25 words, family news of strictly personal character.)
(25 mots au maximum, nouvelles de caractère strictement personnel et familial.)

doing well. Recently got news concerning Joe from Miami. Be well, may the Lord help Joe. Mother, Darling, Gyrookam, Imiekem
Kisses Hugo

Chapter Vineland, N.J. Date January 24, 1943

ADDRESSEE—DESTINATAIRE
Name Glick
(Nom)
Christian name Juliska
(Prénom)
Street Karimay
(Rue)
Locality Sarospatak
(Localité)
Province Comlen
(Province)

BIRTH—NAISSANCE
Place and Date 11.9.1898
Citizen of Hungary
(Nationalité)
Name of father Schwarz Moor
(Nom du père)
Relationship to Sender Wife
(Parent ou envoyeur)
Country Hungary
15 JUN 1943 (Paris)

Reply on the reverse side
Write very legibly

REPLY—RÉPONSE

ENVOI 226/322

Message to be sent to inquire—Message à renvoyer au demandeur
(not more than 25 words, family news of strictly personal character.)
(25 mots au maximum, nouvelles de caractère strictement personnel et familial.)

Darling! Hugo, Beni were here. He and they are going at Kassa. Luci, Béla are healthy and we too. The dogs are spending the vacation. Many kisses
Juliska Gyrookam Imiekem

Date—Date
Signature

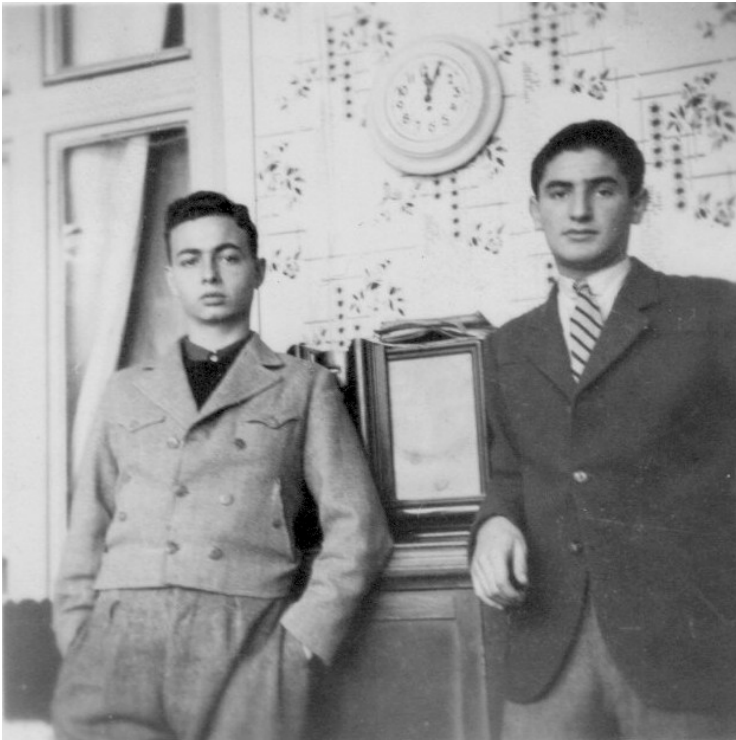
Please write very legibly

Please write very legibly

Prépare d'écrire très lisiblement

AMERICAN RED CROSS
DEC 13 1943
INQUIRY UNIT

A few letters were exchanged with Hugo in America through the Red Cross. Both sides of a 1943 letter are shown here.



Julius and cousin Gabor in Sarospatak, circa 1943. Until the spring of 1944, they continued to attend the Protestant gymnasium.



Jews lined up for deportation from eastern Hungary, 1944.



Ksiaz Castle near Wroclaw in Silesia, Poland, today. When Julius worked on preparing the castle to be a residence for Hitler, it was known as Salzbrun Castle and the nearby city was called Breslau.

COMING BACK

“He didn’t come back.” When family and friends reminisce, someone may ask, “What happened to your Uncle Bela?” The answer, “He didn’t come back,” politely evades reciting the unknowns of Uncle Bela’s fate in the Holocaust. He was taken away from his home, and he did not come back.

Julius came back. His Szabo cousin Gabor came back, but Gabor’s brother Sandor did not come back. Of Julius’ immediate family, his father, Hugo Gluck, was safe in America. His brother Imre did not come back. Imre marched west from Silesia with Gabor and other Sarospatak Jews in February 1945. Gabor and two close friends arrived in Dresden in time for the American bombing of the city, in which the two friends were killed. Imre never reached Dresden; he died on the road. Julius says, “I think he must have been shot because he was weak and couldn’t keep up. Gabor always acted as if he didn’t know exactly what happened. I think he wanted to spare my feelings.”

For many years Julius believed his mother died immediately after the first selection at Auschwitz. Then, in 1995, we met with a cousin of his mother, now an elderly widow, in her apartment in Haifa. I sat by during a long, quiet conversation entirely in Hungarian. Julius never weeps, but his voice was thick as he told me this woman was with his mother in a work camp near Kracow in Poland. The work was hard, but as their physical strength ebbed, Julia clung to her standards. She found a little sliver of soap and brought it to her cousin. “Look,” she said, “you can wash your shirt.” Her cousin said she was too tired. Why bother! “Give me your shirt,” Julia said, “and I’ll do it for you.” Shamed, her cousin washed it herself. After several months, the women were taken back to Auschwitz for another selection. Julia did not come back.

I never met Julia, but I have a clear vision of the woman with the soap. There are other images. “She was sociable,” Julius remembers, “and loved to talk with people – her neighbors, her close friend who lived across the street. She loved us.” In memory he sees his mother sitting at the tea table by the window in the front room of the house in Sarospatak, holding her book and looking down into the street.

When Julius came back, he started by riding in a bus the Russians provided to Prague, where he spent several days before boarding a train for Budapest. He was stronger and his knee had healed, but he had a continuous drainage from his right ear from a longstanding infection. On the train he met a medical worker who looked at him with concern, and advised him to go to a hospital as soon as he reached Budapest.

At the Budapest Jewish Hospital Julius was almost immediately scheduled for surgery, during which his infected middle ear was removed. Antibiotics like penicillin were not yet in use in Hungary. As he recovered, Julius realized that he had permanently lost all hearing in his right ear and the right side of his face was paralyzed, due to damage to his facial nerve. Several later operations were ineffective at restoring the nerve function. As he has aged, the difference between the two sides of his face has become more noticeable.

Julius spent two months in the hospital and during that time he had visitors. First, a U.S. Navy man attached to the American Embassy appeared, looking for him. Hugo, now an American citizen, had learned of Julius’ survival, probably through one of the Jewish refugee organizations. He appealed to the Embassy to find his son, and they did. Several old friends from Sarospatak, now in Budapest, came and, most important, his cousin Gabor came. He had returned to Sarospatak from Dresden and was working with

several relatives to try to recover some of the family property. I asked Gabor how he learned that Julius was still alive. "He sent a postcard." That's typical; he still likes to send postcards.

The following year, from the fall of 1945 when he left the hospital, until the fall of 1946 when he received his exit papers, Julius went back and forth between Sarospatak and Budapest. In Sarospatak, he worked with Gabor to retrieve property and raise money. Also, food was more available there than in Budapest. At one point he traded cooking oil for English lessons. In Budapest he stayed with a distant relative, Aunt Josie, and also with a friend of his father's. (Hungarians address relatives of the older generation as "aunt" or "uncle," but they are usually cousins of some degree.) He remembers shipping flour from Sarospatak to Aunt Josie and being pleasantly surprised when it arrived safely. In the chaotic aftermath of the Hungarian defeat and the Russian occupation, he pursued getting identification papers, a passport, and travel documents. He also resumed the study of English and basic electronics.

Gabor had lost everyone close to him except Julius, but he had a plan. He would stay in Hungary and study medicine at the University in Debrecen. In the next years he built a career in medicine and became a professor at the university. Although he is gone now, his sons and grandchildren still live in Hungary.

Did Julius consider remaining in Hungary? "I only wanted to join my father in America." Julius had inclined toward engineering in his last years in the gymnasium, and he now intended to study electronic engineering in America. In an interview at the gymnasium, the headmaster advised him to repeat his last year and take the matriculation examinations. Julius refused. He was going to America. "If you don't matriculate, you will never amount to anything," the headmaster warned him, but Julius did not change his mind.

In the fall of 1946, while he was awaiting his papers, Julius made a dangerous visit to Czechoslovakia. He still had no passport, so a family friend smuggled him over the border. His first purpose was to attend the wedding of his cousin Agi in Kosice. Agi, who had survived in hiding in Budapest, had lost all of her immediate family: her parents, her brother and her first husband. Everyone who was left – Julius, Gabor, Agi – had to start over, and Julius wanted to be with the family he had left. Agi and her new husband eventually made their way to Israel, where they still live.

Big Imre, Julius' enterprising cousin who used to lead the others into trouble during country vacations, had also survived and was now an officer in the Czechoslovak army. He attended the wedding and afterwards escorted Julius on a return to the area of the High Tatras where he had recuperated from tuberculosis as a child. Doctors in Budapest had found evidence of renewed TB infection and recommended the curative powers of mountain air for Julius. Big Imre's assistance was necessary because Julius had no papers and did not speak either Czech or Slovak. When approached by the locals, Big Imre spoke Slovak and Julius played dumb or spoke only English. A few years later, Big Imre went to Israel where he became Uri Gilad and an officer in the IDF.

Julius spent some weeks enjoying the mountain environment and even skied a little. Food was more abundant than in Hungary, but he felt insecure. He wrote to Uncle Laci who sent a large loaf of bread. Julius is not sure now whether he actually ate the bread, or just kept it in reserve.

The Tatras form the border with Poland. In 1946, the surviving Polish Jews were being subjected to attacks, so many of them were infiltrating the border into Czechoslovakia. Suspicious local police were checking on strangers, and Julius was

apprehended. Big Imre had left, and Julius had to confess to being Hungarian. Despite the losses of the war, many family connections still held good. The Hungarian-speaking police officer knew the Gluck family and had been a good friend of Uncle Bela, so Julius was released. Another family friend helped him to return over the border, riding like a vagrant in a freight train back to Budapest.

Julius remained in Budapest, trying to get his papers to go to America. He is no finagler, and his orderly mind does not contend well with an obstinate bureaucracy. Perhaps at Hugo's suggestion, one of his father's Horowitz cousins obtained travel documents for the two of them. They traveled together by train through Switzerland to Paris, where they stayed for several weeks while obtaining tickets on a large American ship, the S. S. United States. Conditions on board were crowded, with four men sharing a cabin, but the food and other arrangements were luxurious.

In New York, Julius was met by Uncle Naci and spent a few days with Naci and Aunt Elza in an apartment in the South Bronx. The apartment was depressing: Elza and Naci were saving every penny to buy a place in Queens, so they sublet a couple of rooms from an unpleasant landlord in a decayed area. What was not depressing was the trip Julius made by bus to meet his father in Vineland in southern New Jersey. The bus passed alternately through empty winter fields and neat country towns, blazing with Christmas lights.

I have tried to imagine that reunion between father and son who had lost so much but still had each other. My questions have not brought me any closer to knowing how it was.

"How did you feel when you saw your father after eight years?" I asked.

"Good. It felt good," he answered, expressionless.

"Did he seem different to you after all that time?"

"No, not really."

"Did you seem different to him?"

"Probably."

"How so?"

"When he left I was 13, but when he saw me again I was 21."

What is clear is that Julius felt the love and practical support of his family. During the next years, Julius lived during the school year with Aunt Elza in Queens. Elza enjoyed her neat townhouse in Middle Village where she grew flowers in the tiny back yard and provided Julius with a room of his own.

He spent summers and school vacations with his father on the chicken farm in Vineland. Hugo had remarried and built a house, where Julius also had a room. Whenever Julius spoke of the difficulties of his engineering studies, Hugo reassured him, "You can always live here on the farm." Julius spent the summers exploring the New Jersey countryside and always returned to Aunt Elza by bus, with a large delivery of chicken and fresh eggs.

He started with night-school English classes in the spring of 1947. By fall he was taking math and physics courses as a non-matriculated student in the engineering school at City College of New York. The basic grounding and study habits from his Hungarian gymnasium had prepared him well. At the end of a year, Julius was able to change his status to a full-time, matriculated and free-tuition student. He obtained both his engineering degree and his U.S. citizenship in 1952.

Twenty years after he left, with the confidence of his American passport, Julius began a series of visits to Hungary, sometimes alone and sometimes with me or other

members of the family. He went to visit Gabor and his growing family. Gabor died in 1998 and his wife, Ibu, a few years afterwards, but the visits continue.



Budapest today. The bridges were rebuilt after World War II.



Cousin Agi in Haifa, Israel, in 2005 with her first great grandchild.



Imre Friedman in Israel, 1952. He had become Uri Gilad.



Vineland, New Jersey, at Christmas.



The Szabos, 1966. From left: Gabor, Sandor, Ibu, Gabor Junior.



Julius and Gabor on the Tisza River in Hungary, summer 1996.

HUGO AND JOLAN

Hugo Gluck, the father Julius met again in Vineland, New Jersey, after eight years, left Hungary in 1938. His visa application said that he wanted to visit the 1939 World's Fair in New York City, but his real purpose was to find a way to bring his family out of Hungary.

One of the first people he visited in New York was his cousin Vilma who lived on Tremont Avenue in the Bronx. Her daughter Clara remembers, "I was at home with my father and my mother was at work, when Hugo turned up at our apartment. I was only 12 years old and terribly embarrassed when Hugo kissed my hand in the elegant Hungarian style. When my mother came in, even though she and Hugo had not seen each other for 16 years, she cried *Hugo!* and threw her arms around him. The other thing I remember is that he wore knickers, and children made fun of him on the street until we explained that knickers were only worn here by young boys." When Julius arrived in 1946, he became good friends with Clara and her brother Clifford. Clara, in turn, became my friend in White Plains in the 1970s and introduced me to Julius.

Hugo stayed with his Aunt Hana and her daughter, Margaret, on Dyckman Street in Washington Heights. Margaret was divorced and struggling to support her son, but the welcome they gave Hugo was a warm one.

Hugo had entered the United States with a visitor's visa and needed to acquire immigrant status to bring his family in. With the flood of refugees from Germany and Eastern Europe the quotas were filled for years ahead. Hugo's solution was to journey to Cuba, where he stayed for six months and became a Cuban citizen. A faded snapshot taken in Cuba shows Hugo in a spiffy tropical suit under a palm tree, standing easily and smiling. Hugo was admitted back into the United States as an immigrant under the Cuban quota. No one in the family cares to speculate about what inducements he offered to make this possible, but everyone speaks well of the Cubans: "a warm and generous people."

By the time Hugo returned from Cuba the war had started, so he could do little for his family in Sarospatak. During the war years Hugo, his sister Elza and her husband Naci operated a chicken farm together in Vineland, New Jersey. Jewish agencies settled many of the incoming refugees in Vineland, then the poultry capital of the United States. For a generation, a community of Jewish chicken farmers in Vineland provided chicken and eggs for the New York City market. Both the farmers and the chickens are gone now. The poultry industry went south, and the children of the chicken farmers went to college and joined the professions.

The chickens and country life were not to Elza and Naci's liking, so they went north, back to the city. That is how they came to be in an apartment in the Bronx when Julius arrived in 1946. Hugo, on the other hand, liked New Jersey and country life. He obtained a small piece of land for his chickens and boarded with a neighbor until he could build his own house.

Hugo completed his house in 1948 and that same year he married Jolan Klein, whom he met through his sister. Jolan came from the same area in eastern Hungary as Hugo. She survived the deportation and labor camp but lost her husband and only son. An American brother helped to get her into the United States, where she first worked as a housekeeper for a wealthy Jewish judge.

I never got to know Hugo, who died before I met Julius, but I knew Jolan well

and admired her. Her nephew says that Jolan vowed in the labor camp that if she survived the war she would live as a Jew. Of course she had been conventionally observant before, but now she was committed to it. She made it a condition for Hugo that they must keep a kosher home, and they did, also attending temple regularly.

When Jolan came to a strange country in her middle 40s, she spoke little English. The Jolan I met spoke English well, read English-language books for pleasure and enjoyed American television. Wheel of Fortune was a favorite of hers. She also learned to drive a car.

In Vineland, Jolan worked hard. I speculate that she made a second vow in that labor camp: provide for the future. She kept house for Hugo and managed the processing and packing of the eggs. The farm was a joint enterprise and the income was for their joint welfare. In addition, Jolan worked in a garment factory and also sold her home-baked pastries to an appreciative clientele. That money was hers, and she invested it in the stock market, preferring large, stable companies like General Electric and AT&T. With help from a sympathetic broker, she traded frequently, cashing in on every small rise in the market.

After Hugo died of stomach ulcer complications in 1964, she sold the chicken farm and, with the proceeds from that and her savings, she financed a comfortable retirement, first in an apartment in Vineland and then in a retirement community in Pennsylvania. When she died in her 90s, there was enough left to provide legacies for Julius and other relatives.

Jolan never stopped being careful with her money. In retirement, she enjoyed trips to Atlantic City on the senior bus. She would exchange precisely \$5 into quarters and play the quarter slot machines until all the money was gone. Then it was time for lunch.

Jolan was proud of what she had accomplished – and liked to tell me about it. She recalled how she once found Hugo studying a catalog of chicken equipment in order to buy feeders for the baby chicks. Jolan looked at the catalog and asked why two apparently identical feeders had different prices. The higher priced feeders came completely assembled, Hugo explained, while the cheaper ones you had to assemble yourself.

“Which ones will you buy?” she asked. He would buy the assembled ones; he didn’t want to bother putting them together. “If I put the cheaper ones together, will you give me the difference?” Of course he would, and that money went into her stock fund.

In their more prosperous later years, Hugo and Jolan were able to travel together. They toured Italy and went to Czechoslovakia to visit Hugo’s surviving brother. Neither of them ever went back to Hungary.



Family party in New York, 1939. In the front row, cousin Margaret is on the left and her son on the right. Hugo stands in the back, second from the left with Aunt Hana Horowitz on the right.



Hugo on the chicken farm in Vineland, 1941. His dress is casual, in contrast to all previous pictures. On the back of this picture is written in his handwriting: "To my dear son Julius." This picture must have been sent to Julius after the war as all earlier pictures were lost.



The house Hugo built in Vineland in 1948. He and Jolan are sitting on the porch.



Jolan and Hugo in Venice, circa 1960.

SAROSPATAK

After I married Julius in 1979, I went with him several times to Hungary. We always stayed in Debrecen with Cousin Gabor and his wife Ibu. Debrecen, about 100 miles east of Budapest, is Hungary's second city, with train service to Budapest. It has a university with a Medical College, where Gabor was a professor and Director of the Institute of Microbiology. Ibu practiced psychiatry in the hospital clinic.

On every visit, we made the journey to Sarospatak. Julius, Gabor and their brothers were all born in that eastern Hungarian town, and Julius lived there until he was 19. Sometimes Gabor and Ibu came with us; at other times, Julius and I went alone. We drove northeast toward the border with Ukraine. After we crossed the Bodrog River we passed through Tokay, circling the perfect shape of Tokay Mountain, which rises like a little Mount Fuji above the plains. On the southwestern slopes of this extinct cinder cone, they grow the sweet grapes for Tokay wine.

After Tokay, the country becomes hillier. The old road from Tokay to Sarospatak went through the villages. We took that road on our most recent visit so Julius could find the house of a distant relative with whom he stayed one summer so that she could fatten him up on her good cooking. Until then, he was just skin and bones. We found the house, little changed during the more than 50 years since he saw it last.

Usually we took the new, fast road the Russians built and went more directly across the fields. Julius was always alert for his first sighting of the Sarospatak vineyards. Julius' mother and Gabor's mother were sisters, and they inherited the vineyards from their father, Moricz Schwarcs. It was a festive time, the grape harvest, but vineyards meant more than that. They said *we own land here, we belong*.

"Why didn't you keep the vineyards?" I asked.

"Gabor and I signed them over to the People's Republic after the war. He was idealistic and I didn't care. I was going to join my father in America."

From the Russian road, we crossed the railroad tracks and entered the main street of the town. Sarospatak has many attractions: a modern hotel; the old Protestant Collegium; Rakoczi Castle, now partly restored; the Soviet-era built House of Culture. The former synagogue stood high on the main street. It was now a furniture store.

"How did it become a store?" I wanted to know.

"They sold it after the war."

"Did they have the right to sell it?" Gabor and Ibu were with us. Everyone looked uncomfortable; no one knew how the transaction was done.

On that same visit the four of us paid a call on a very old woman whom Gabor described as "perhaps the last Jew in Sarospatak." Who was she exactly? Again, everyone looked uncomfortable. The woman we visited lived in several rooms on the ground floor of a typical town house with its windows set high above the street and the entrance on the side. We sat in a room full of dusty furniture, too much furniture, crowded together so that we were formed a tight circle in the remaining space, sipping pink liqueur from tiny glasses and hearing long recitals in Hungarian.

"What did she say?" I asked later.

"She is not happy; they cheat her; she wants to leave."

"Do they cheat her?" I was ready to be indignant. Well, Gabor and the others were not sure of the rights and wrongs of her situation.

On a later visit Julius and I walked about at the traditional Protestant school, the

one Julius attended. Repairs had been made; a new building was going up. We viewed the many plaques for sports teams, distinguished graduates, and valiant soldiers. At the office the Assistant Director was pleased to meet a former student who is now an American. *You were here in 1944 and did not graduate? A Jew? Yes, that is interesting. We had some, I believe. No, we do not have a plaque for those who were taken away that year. I don't think that is something the school ought to do. Perhaps you should speak with them at the municipal hall.*

The four of us always went to the Jewish cemetery. It is on the road out of town, past the new gymnasium. The cemetery is a tract of ground, perhaps 100 feet by 200 feet, enclosed by a brick and stucco wall. In order to open the locked gate we need to get the key from the man who keeps it. The ground is hummocky and overgrown. Hungary in midsummer is warm and dry and this place smells of the dry grass. The stones were hard to read as we searched for family members. Stumbling about we found a tall, rather narrow stone which identified the grave of Moricz Schwarcz, Julius' grandfather, who was born in Sarospatak, lived there all his life, owned vineyards, and died in 1933. A newer stone marked the place where Gabor's parents are buried. They committed suicide in 1944 after the others were taken away from Sarospatak. On the back of that stone is an additional inscription. Translated from the Hungarian, it reads:

In Memory of

An Unforgettable Wife and son Imre

Beloved Mother and Brother

Who Perished During the Deportation

In Auschwitz

Placed by Hugo Gluck and His Son Julius

Ibu picked Queen Ann's lace and wild sunflowers along the road. When she placed them on the graves, the flowers disappeared into the long grass. Julius and I followed the Jewish custom and left a pebble on each headstone to say *we were here, we remember.*



The village home of Julius' father's uncle, where Julius spent one of his boyhood summers to be fattened up.



Gabor and Julius in Sarospatak. standing by the road from the nearest of the former family vineyards, circa 1994.



Gabor clearing weeds around his parents grave in Sarospatak. The stone also has a memorial inscription for Julia Schwarcz and Imre Gluck, Julius's mother and brother, circa 1994.

MAPS



Eastern Europe. Hungary is a small, landlocked country in eastern Europe. Before the treaty which ended World War I, it was the larger Kingdom of Hungary within the Austro-Hungarian Empire which also included today's Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.



Hungary Today. The principal city is Budapest. Hungary's second city is Debrecen, directly east from Budapest, near the border with Romania. The Szabo family lives in Debrecen. Sarospatak is in the northeast, very near the border with Slovakia.



Important Locations in Poland. The Auschwitz Concentration Camp was at Oswiecim, near Krakow and just above the border with Slovakia. Ksiaz Castle, where Julius worked, is near Wrocław, which was then called Breslau. This area is also known as Silesia.



Vineland, New Jersey. Vineland is west of Atlantic City, in the southern, agricultural part of the state.